

# **REVOLUTION**

socialist youth movement

**Issue 96**

# **Capitalism = Corruption**

We're really sorry...

... that we got caught out!



## **Inside...**

**• MP expenses claims • Police harassment • Recession hits youth • Unions march for jobs • Revo summer camp • Swine flu • Aghan women fight for rights**

# a word from the editor

"A collective nervous breakdown" was how one MP described the current atmosphere in the House of Commons. Every day a new expense claim even more ridiculous than the day before is being brought into the public eye. Nadine Dorris, a Tory MP has warned that the atmosphere is so tense that there is even a danger of some politicians cracking under the pressure and considering suicide.

Every little helps, but it will take mass action of workers against the job cuts, pay cuts and public sector cutbacks inflicted upon us by the government and the bosses if we are to see large numbers of these Westminster parasites jumping under that train.

And that action has started to happen. May 1st was International Workers Day, a day to celebrate the unity of workers all over the world. In Britain, this is generally not a huge affair but this year Revo did our best in the city of Leeds forming a lively trade union youth contingent breathing colour into what is usu-

ally a very grey event. In Germany and Greece demonstrators fought police for their right to protest and in Turkey trade unions successfully fought for the day to be a national holiday. In France an incredible 1.2 million people took to the streets.

Then on May 16, Revo took part in a thousands strong demonstration against job cuts organised by the Unite trade union, countering protectionist 'defend British jobs' speeches by officials by chanting 'Workers of the world - unite!'.

This is a very important slogan right now. The wildcat strikes we saw in December this year, with workers directing their anger at migrants have again flared up. Back then some workers were holding up placards on the picket lines calling for 'British jobs for British workers', a slogan which needs to be challenged head-on wherever it is raised.

The people raising it most of all are of course the fascist British National Party. They are attempting to gain alot of support from people fed up of the mainstream

parties, poverty and unemployment - people who have been sucked into thinking that the crisis should be blamed on immigrants.

It's time to fight to unite all the different struggles of workers and youth worldwide to resist the attacks which come with the recession, including the rise of the far-right. The Visteon workers understood internationalism perfectly when their factory occupation got letters of support from all over the world. Tamils protesting against the genocide in Sri Lanka understood it as they marched in London on Mayday and Revolution members will be sharing and discussing stories of struggle at our international camp from 5-9 August.

From huge school student demonstrations in Germany to mass school strikes in Austria, to challenging the cult of Obama in the USA and to the struggles in South East Asia, we all have alot to learn from the international gathering, so when you've finished reading this magazine and enjoyed it, don't forget to book your place! Ed ;)

France: Workers take to streets on Mayday



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# MPs are the real benefit cheats

**\*MIKE T\*LEEDS\***

**W**ith the government recently giving billions of pounds to the bankers, it is pleasing to see that they have not forgotten themselves. Both the Conservative and the labour governments of this country have always claimed that there is not enough money to provide for our hospitals or education. These members of parliament have clearly been extracting more than their fair share from the money we pay in taxes. This has happened in all of the major parties, and is mostly within the current rules.

Many of the politicians have been claiming living expenses for second homes, closer to parliament, that far exceed what most people would ever need to live on. Wrexham MP, Ian Lucas claimed twenty two thousand pounds to move into a London home, and sold his cheaper home for a profit.

If MPs need to stay closer to London, then they should be rented a small apartment. Let them stay in a run-down council block; it may actually give them a view on how the rest of us live.

John Austin, a labour MP, claimed ten thousand pounds for a second home 11 miles away from his first. He then redecorated it and sold it on to make thirty thousand pounds profit. He was in the 'socialist campaign group', aren't those guys meant to be the socialists in Labour? Ian Lucas from Wrexham makes a thousand pounds a month on rent this way.

While an increasing section of the British public are losing their hard-earned property to debt and having to make do, the politicians are claiming wide-screen televi-

sions, and even a one thousand pound rocking chair claimed by Julia Goldsworthy of the Liberal Democrats. Douglas Hogg, a former agriculture secretary got three thousand pounds to clear a moat around his house. Phil Woolas, the immigration minister and the man who tries to convince us that refugees are draining our economy, was found out to be using his expenses to buy weekly groceries.

Politicians have even been found out to be carrying out, what should be treated as, fraud. Labour Peer Baroness Uddin claimed one hundred thousand pounds for an unoccupied flat. James Purnell, the work and pensions secretary claimed more than two thousand pounds a month for rent, but only spends about nine hundred pounds a month on rent. Many more examples can be found in the news;

see for yourself.

The rewards that the MPs of all parties have claimed show how much politics has become a matter of ego and self-indulgence. With capitalism being a system of self-enrichment and inequality, perhaps it should come as no surprise that politicians who live their lives handing over our public sector resources to banks and letting people like Fred Goodwin walk off with £15 million pensions whilst unemployment soars are happy to dip their hands in the cookie jar from time to time.

What we need is a new kind of political party that represents working class people and opposes the capitalist system - an anti-capitalist party whose reps in parliament are 100% accountable to the party membership. They would take the wage of an average skilled worker and live in the accommodation and lead a quality of life similar to the workers they represented. They would be recallable at any time and would always vote according to the will of the party membership.

How would it be formed? Well the Visteon workers who occupied their factory when they were sacked and the parents in Glasgow and London who have occupied schools against closure could certainly play a vital role in forming a fighting party we so badly need.

Revolutionaries would fight within such a party for revolution and socialism - it wouldn't be just an electoral party but a campaigning party organising workers and youth on the streets in every town and city for capitalism's overthrow and an end to all corruption for good.



I claimed expenses for 2 toilet seats in one year.  
Now that's an expense claim worth a song!  
Lalalaaa.... lalalah!

# Police harass college students

It's official - the police use stop and search to intimidate and criminalise youth and ethnic minorities. The latest statistics are shocking: the number of people stopped and searched under the anti-terror legislation has tripled over the past 2 years and yet still only 6 in every 10,000 people searched are arrested, never mind charged or convicted. What does this tell us? It confirms that the police are using the powers awarded by this legislation to push us around, to let us know that they have all the power.

Stop and search isn't just happening on the streets, but the cops are using the image that young people are given in the media to justify wholesale stop and searches at colleges.

This happened at Park Lane College in Leeds a few weeks ago, and REVOLUTION are going to fight it! If the cops went into a normal everyday office with sniffer dogs, erected metal detector arches and lined everyone up to be searched then there'd be outrage. To treat people different just

because they're young is out of order.

We've started a petition and are going to get as many students and staff as possible to sign up. We demand that the college bans stop and search on the premises and keeps places of education free from harassment. If the college ignores that then we'll organise to take further action.

REVOLUTION interviewed one PLC student who didn't take kindly to being searched. Here's what Terry had to say:

'The day the police came along there were signs up everywhere announcing it, saying that they'd have sniffer dogs and metal detectors 'for your safety and comfort'. I just needed to go to the library to get a book out but had to wait in a queue for 10 minutes while they searched everyone.

'When I got up to the arch I was told to empty my pockets to a tub before walking through, no 'please' or anything. Then I was told to go and stand by another copper so that they could scan me with a

hand-held metal detector. They were rude and aggressive so I said "a 'please' wouldn't go amiss" but he ignored that and started barking orders at me instead like 'hold your arms up'. When he told me to turn around I told him to walk around me instead and he replied by telling me I had a bad attitude. I ignored him and got my phone out of the tub and walked off.

Then I realised I'd left my keys behind and went back for them but the copper wouldn't give them to me until he'd first given me a lecture about my attitude problem. I just expect a bit of respect if they're going to inconvenience me like that.

'No-one's ever been stabbed or anything at the college as far as I know and apart from the odd bit of weed smoking outside there's rarely any problems - and that doesn't justify the way we were treated'.

If you're a student at Park Lane College and want to keep the cops out then contact us at:

**leeds@worldrevolution.org.uk**

## Wanker of the month

Times are tough, economically. That may be the biggest understatement of the year, but it seems there are some people who still just don't grasp it and are spending like there's no tomorrow. Now, that might not seem much of a problem - after all, consumer spending supposedly stimulates the economy, and if they want to throw their money about surely we should let them? Maybe so. However, the cash they are so carelessly pissing away on love-shacks for ducks, grand-piano tuning, or having their FUCKING MOATS cleaned is OUR MONEY!

Yes that's right, this month "WOTM" is in fact "Wankers of the Month" as there are just too many of the fuckers to choose from. But, let's endeavour to pick some of the best...

1. Geoff Hoon - Yes, our friend Mr Hoon. Revo members at Leeds University were lucky enough to be treated to a speech from this warmonger last year. We led a lecture hall in chanting Geoff down for the blood on his hands in Iraq and Afghanistan, and shamed him into silence with questions about his dishonesty. His decisions have cost us



billions of pounds in fighting these unjust wars. However, apparently he wasn't ashamed enough not to swindle the taxpayers a little more with his claim for 2 top-of-the-range TVs

2. John Prescott - Old John claimed for some lovely mock Tudor beams for the front of his house. Well, one has to have the house to match the Jags! He also claimed for two new toilet seats in one year. What's amazing is that he's used the toilet so much that it's broken twice and yet he is STILL so full of shit.

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3. Jonathan Djanogly - The millionaire shadow business minister, claimed £5,000 to have electric gates installed at his Huntington home. Of course! You wouldn't want any fucking poor people getting in would you!?

4. Alan Haselhurst - The Deputy Speaker charged the taxpayer almost £12,000 for gardening bills at his farmhouse in Essex. Apparently a £100,000+ salary wouldn't cover it...

5. Douglas Hogg - The award for Most Stereotypical Fucking Tory has to go to Doug here. Included with

his expenses claims were: the cost of having his piano tuned and stable lights fixed at his country manor house, bills for a "mole man", the cost of running his housekeeper's car and a £31 call-out to have bees removed. Oh, and the cost of having HIS FUCKING MOAT CLEANED! Unbe-cocking-lievable.

6. Phil Woolas - The Immigration Minister who is so vehement about not letting in any "Sponging Asylum-Seekers" claimed the maximum allowance for food on his second home in most years. He also illegally

claimed for red wine, panty-liners, tampons, nappies and a blouse as "food expenses". I have to admit Phil, that does sound like one hell of a night!

So, in short, when MPs are not spending our money on illegal wars, tax breaks for big business or ploughing it into services which they then privatise, they are spending it on TVs, toilet seats and tampons. Oh, and having their FUCKING MOATS CLEANED! Wankers.

By Richard, LEEDS

# Recession hits youth hard

**\*BY MIKE R\*LEEDS\***

**A**t the end of term this year, 1 in 3 school leavers will be unable to find work. That's 1.5 million young people thrown onto the scrapheap. At present, unemployment among 16-24 year-olds is three times the national average of the 2.2 million people now out of work due to the recession. Now some experts are warning of a 'lost generation', a generation that will leave education only to experience immediate long-term unemployment, something which can cause irreparable damage to a working life. Young people are said to be the future, yet we are being hit particularly hard by this recession.

On top of slim prospects of finding work when we leave school, those that enter higher education will face rising debts, in terms of tuition fees (around £3000 at the moment) and cost of living. These debts could, if the cap on fees is lifted in 2010, rise to 2 £10,000 per year, making education a commodity and a privilege only a few can buy. This is at a time when many jobs and pay at universities, schools and colleges are being slashed, as well as courses being scrapped and funding cut. The mind boggles as

to where the fees are actually going!

When we are lucky enough to find a job, it is very often for poverty pay. The minimum wage is also age-discriminatory, as it changes depending on what band you fit into. The minimum wage for 16-18 year-olds being a laughable £3.53 per hour, and is about 80p more if you're aged 18-21! There is no reason that young people should get less than older people, or that young people should be stratified and divided according to age. This is just common-sense - equal pay for equal work. Young people still have to pay bills, buy food and have lives! These jobs (such as so-called McJobs in the service sector) are commonly insecure, on temporary contracts or no contract at all, as bosses know there is a massive pool of unemployed youth desperate enough to work for such measly wages and can always be replaced.

The bosses are making us pay for their crisis with unemployment, low pay and cuts in services. When companies go under, their chief executives don't end up on the dole, they just pocket the assets that are left and buy

mansions. More and more of us are getting angry, erupting on the streets on demonstrations, like the ones in March against the G20. The now infamous police repression of those protests shows that the police are ready and willing to beat us into submission when we stand up and say 'we won't pay for their crisis!' Police repression, especially against youth under the guise of 'anti-terror' laws, will increase in the coming period as the powers-that-be send in their boys-in-blue to 'maintain order', using force to keep the 'lost generation' from fighting back. But don't worry - we will!

The failures of the bosses' system, capitalism, have been displayed by the economic crisis. It cannot provide for the billions of people on this Earth, even though we're told it's all there can ever be. But it's clear that thousands, even millions, of people around the world are willing to fight for something better, to say 'they are the crisis and we are the solution!' Let's make 2009 the year we really show the bosses' we mean business and make them pay for the crisis they created!



# Revo demonstrates for jobs for all

**R**evo took to the streets of Birmingham on May 16, a city which has suffered enormously as a result of the recession. A centre of factories and manufacturing in the UK, Birmingham now has an unemployment rate of 10% due to job cuts.

About 5000 people attended the demonstration which was organised by the Unite trade union, most of whom were waving red unite flags making for an impressive spectacle. Unfortunately the demonstration was focussed a lot around the lines of defending British manufacturing and British jobs – rather than fighting for jobs for all, but we chanted loudly slogans such as “Jobs for all is our fight! Workers of the world unite!” Lots of manufacturing workers joined in with us. Our contingent was given extra life by four school students from Manchester who certainly knew how to chant!

The rally after the short demonstration which mostly marched

along Birmingham’s nightclub district was hit by a downpour after a mostly bright sunny morning. Trade union leaders spoke of the need to defend ‘British manufacturing’, but were short on saying how they would do it. The people we really wanted to listen to – Visteon workers who courageously occupied their factory to defend their rights and sacked shop steward militant Rob Williams weren’t on the platform.

After the rally we held a quick REVOLUTION meeting talking about the next important political events – a protest against education cuts and a protest against police repression in London next Saturday and the Unite Against Fascism carnival in Stoke-on-Trent on Saturday 30 May. Mike, a Revolution member from Leeds who also belongs to the Unite trade union warned us of the dangers of the ‘British jobs for British workers’ slogan and initiatives like the No2EU electoral coalition which unite British bosses with

British workers, whilst dividing the working class along national lines.

We had a good day overall, but this demonstration really confirms what we already knew – the trade union leaders aren’t organising the kind of fight back that we need, where as rank and file workers at Visteon show the most effective forms of action that can be used to protect jobs and rights at work. Socialists and rank and file unionists need to spread this message everywhere if we are to protect our jobs at a time like this.



**★ GLOBAL REVOLUTION ★**  
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  - Youth fight for jobs! Organising the unemployed in Europe today

### GLOBAL sessions on:

- Racism in Europe today – the parties and their strategies
- The struggles in Latin America today
- The struggle for socialism in Pakistan today
- Sri Lanka: The workers movement and the struggle against the war on terror

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- Explaining sexism – the roots of women’s oppression
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# Capitalist pigs cause swine flu

**\*BY MARK\*LEEDS\***

**T**he swine flu pandemic is spreading around the world and threatening thousands of people.

Flu infects many animals, including waterfowl, pigs and humans. Birds and people rarely catch flu viruses adapted to another host, but they can pass flu to pigs, which also have their own strains. If a pig catches two kinds of flu at once it can act as a mixing vessel, and hybrids can emerge with genes from both viruses. This is what has happened with the latest case of swine flu.

As it spreads and threatens to infect hundreds and thousands worldwide socialists must be clear that this is not a freak accident or some natural calamity but a product of the capitalist system and its inhuman and unnatural way of producing food and caring for livestock worldwide. The disease, its development and spread has its roots firmly in the industrial farming which is part and parcel of modern capitalist agriculture.

Under capitalism the overriding tendency affecting all commercial decisions is whether they maximise profit. Agriculture is no different and in their search for ever greater profits the massive agricultural corporations willingly sacrifice the health and safety of their workers, animals and the natural environment to their need to produce massive profits. In the meat farming industry this has resulted in the creation of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) known to the rest of us as "factory farms", massive warehouses where tens of thousands of animals are herded together in tiny pens to reduce the costs of caring for and feeding the animals. Conditions in these factories are horrific. The pens are terribly crowded, the animals are heavily dosed with vaccines and antibiotics just to keep them alive, the vast concentration of so many animals in such a small space means that any diseases they develop are easily spread and they produce a huge volume of waste which lies around in huge pools providing a breeding ground for disease.

This creates a fertile environment for the development of new diseases. Already pig flu has developed and



mutated so often in US factory farms that it is no longer a seasonal disease as it used to be, but rather exists all year round, mutating constantly in the disgusting conditions of factory farms and proliferating so rapidly that 1 in 5 of the factory farms produce their own vaccines as the vaccine industry cannot keep up with the development of the disease. While previous outbreaks of the disease have been restricted to workers on the factory farms and their immediate families, this time the agro-corporations were not so lucky and a strain of the virus has developed which can transmit easily between humans.

The first patient to be infected with swine flu has been identified as Edgar Hernandez, a five-year-old from La Gloria in the Mexican state of Veracruz. The region is home to nearly a million pigs on 8 different industrial factory farms; all owned and operated by Smithfield Foods, a massive US farming corporation worth \$1.4 billion US and the largest supplier of pork in the world. For months before the outbreak of swine flu the residents of La Gloria had been protesting against the pig farms. They demanded they take safety precautions as the constant leaks from the manure lagoons and huge amounts of flies attracted to the piles of manure and pig carcasses found all over the factory farm posed a health risk to the population of the town. At the beginning of April, 2 weeks before the outbreak was identified the residents reported a massive increase in respiratory disease, with over half the towns 3,000 population reported sick.

While Smithfield Food reported no symptoms of swine flu amongst its workers or herds of pigs, saying it administers swine influenza vaccines and regularly checks its herds for symptoms this does not prevent the disease from developing. United States Department of Agriculture researchers say that while vaccination keeps pigs from getting sick, it does not block infection or shedding of the virus.

Now swine flu has made the jump back from animals to humans and is spreading around the globe. It is a huge risk to public health and could ravage whole populations who are impoverished and malnourished by the global economic crisis and ensuing fall in living standards. The capitalists disregard for the wellbeing of humans and livestock in their mad dash for profit has endangered millions of lives.

We must demand the abolition of these socially and environmentally destructive farming practices. As long as these factory farms exist they will provide a breeding ground for diseases which will continue to emerge sporadically to devastate the world's populace.

As socialists we realise that the advances in technology and modern farming methods are progressive in that they allow the production of massive surpluses of food which have the potential to satisfy all the world's food needs.

But these agricultural practices have to be balanced with the need to develop environmentally sustainable agriculture which can satisfy society's needs for plentiful food without damaging the environment and forcing animals to live in horrible conditions. It is this requirement - balancing food production with care for the environment that capitalism cannot provide with its insatiable appetite for profit.

We need the workers on these farms and in the big corporations to take control of these massive industries out of the hands of the capitalists and run them democratically and sustainably to meet the needs of consumers, the environment and animals.

# Afghan women march for their rights

**D**espite the brutal occupation and the power of religious leaders, women in Afghanistan marched last month against a law that would legalise marital rape. 200 hundred made it to the demonstration in Kabul and there are reports that many more attempted to take part but were prevented from doing so by their families or by militiamen loyal to the religious leaders.

Mohamad Asif Mohseni, a powerful Shia cleric, had called on men to prevent their female relatives from attending and it is in-

spiring to see these women resisting their oppression and protesting for their right to control their own bodies. In a time when Muslim women are portrayed in the media simply as meek victims that the US and UK need to invade a country and murder thousands of people (including many women) to protect, demonstrations like this smash that myth and show that women are strong enough to fight occupation, fight oppression and struggle for socialism.